



Background information

Luama Hunting Reserves cover two provinces in the Eastern DRC (Katanga and Kivu) and are home to large mammals and various tree species.

Although the area still has some biodiversity, there are concerns about large mammal population and management of the area. For example, the Luama Katanga Hunting Reserve has been abandoned by the conservation management agency (ICCN) since the early 1990s and the Luama Kivu part since the late 1990s. This has led to encroachment of these reserves and depletion of species due to unregulated hunting and the absence of an enforcement body.

With support from Rufford to support conservation of large mammals in the area, we have been able to support some conservation activities with some results:

- Monthly patrols to assess the status of the reserve.
- Training of rangers in data collection and data analysis.
- Survey of hippopotamus in Luama.
- Community meetings regarding the reserve.



1 Implemented activities

Activities were implemented in cooperation with ICCN rangers and RACOD field staff to



collect data and organise community meetings.

1.1 Ranger training on law enforcement

Given that there are volunteers in place working for ICCN to patrol the area in some periods, we planned to train rangers in using field equipment and data collection. The training was held at the reserve headquarters under a tree given that there is no infrastructure in place. The training was run by Deo Kujirakwinja supported by two RACOD staff (Lucien Ramazani and Patrick Matembe) and Benjamin Wilondja, the Chief Park Warden (CPW) of Luama

Hunting Reserve. In total, 24 rangers were trained in GPS use, data collection, patrol planning and census method for hippopotamus.

- Training on GPS use covered the history of the GPS, its basic use and importance in conservation through ranger-based monitoring and adaptive management.
- Data collection component covered mammal species identification to be monitored, ecological parameters to be collected and human impact
- Patrol planning was based on how to use other field equipment's such as tents, compass and how to lead patrols and the importance of debriefing sessions



Figure 1: Training of rangers in Luama-Kivu (left) and field practice (right)

1.2 Support to ranger patrols with rations

With support from Rufford, we have been providing ranger rations monthly to enable ranger deployment in different parts of the reserve. To date, seven patrols have been supported and three research expeditions for hippo counts.

Results from patrols suggest existence of a very small hippo population and isolated primates (chimpanzees and other monkeys). There have been no sign of elephant sighting although there are some duikers seen (Bongo and Kobs).

Human activities are recorded mainly illegal fishing and animal snaring. The fishing is allowed in Luama Reserve but should be regulated.



Figure 2. Fishing camp in the reserve boundaries (left) and a charcoal making site (right)

These patrols have been helpful as they have an impact on people attitude towards the reserve. Given that rangers are going for patrolling regularly, there are limited human activities going on in the reserve such as cultivation, mining and poaching.

1.3 Censusing hippos

Three field trips were organized to count hippos using a water count technique as field visits are almost impossible given the size of the river. From these visits, 13 hippos have been sighted, tracks and dungs were observed in different sectors of the reserve.



1.4 Community meetings

In order to get support from communities on conservation of the reserve, there was a need of holding series of meetings with local chiefs and leaders to discuss on cooperation for conservation. As part of the partnership, one representative from the community took part of the rangers' training and held three meetings in the area.

Topic discussed included regulations of fishing in the reserve, management of the park and community involvement.





Figure 3: Meetings between the chief Park Warden and local chiefs in Luiko bordering the reserve and representative from the security services